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S M O K I N G

A SURE SIGN OF

ENGLAND'S FUTURE DECLINE,

BY

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# SMOKING A SURE SIGN OF ENGLAND'S FUTURE DECLINE.

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"THE great need of the times," said the Earl of Derby, when expatiating on the importance of the inhalation of pure air, is means for preventing the depression of the National Standard." But it is very doubtful whether his lordship ever traced the connection between the national evil of Smoking Tobacco, and "the great need of the times." Anything short of this, betrays the evidence that one actual cause of the creation of that great need was overlooked by his lordship. It has been said in effect by the Registrar General,—If the many hundreds of medical men in the metropolis were as assiduous in finding out the causes of disease, as they are to provide remedies, the bills of mortality would assume a very different aspect.

To him we are indebted primarily for an article recently published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, headed

"INFANT MORTALITY,"—which runs thus—

"It is to be regretted that the Blue-book giving the average annual proportion of deaths in England during the ten years 1861-70 is unaccompanied by explanation or comment of any kind. We cannot help thinking it a mistake to issue to the public long tables of figures without a word to bring out their real significance. Of course these tables are intended primarily for scientific students. But the subject to which they relate is very interesting to us all, and it seems to us worth an effort to try and attract public attention to it. Yet in spite of the repulsive look of these long statistical columns they tell a story of which none should remain in ignorance. And first they set in a very clear light the frightful waste of infant life which is going on among us. For example, it appears that, taking the whole population of England and Wales of all ages and both sexes, the average annual death-rate during the ten years was 2,242 out of every 100,000; in other words, it was not quite  $2\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. But among children under five years of age the death-rate was as high as 6,830 out of the 100,000, or over  $6\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. The mortality among children under five was thus more than three times greater than among the entire population, including, of course, these very children and also the aged. Even this, however, is not the worst, nor nearly the worst. Among children under one year of age the death-rate was actually as high as 18,041 out of the 100,000, or over 18 per cent. That is to say, the mortality among infants less than twelve months old was not a great deal short of being three times as high as among children under five, and was actually more than eight times as great as the mortality





of the whole population. Turning to the great divisions of the country, we find the infant mortality greatest in the north-western counties (21,356 out of the 100,000). Yorkshire comes next (20,496); and London is third (19,044). On the other hand, the south-eastern counties stand lowest on the list (14,273); the south-western counties are next to them (14,822); and Wales is next to these (15,181). And, in respect to the mortality of children under five, the precedence is nearly the same, with this exception, however, that London takes the second instead of the third place. Coming to London itself, it is surprising to find that infant mortality is greater in St. Margaret's, Westminster (23,230), than in any part of the East-end, the highest rate there being (22,748) in Whitechapel. The absolutely highest infant mortality in London was in St. Giles' (24,840). With respect to the causes of death, it will probably surprise most persons to learn that the most fatal of all ailments in the case of children under five years of age appears to be brain disease, including under that term hydrocephalus. The average annual proportion of deaths due to this cause was as much as 1,237 out of the total of 6,830. Brain disease, therefore, is responsible for very nearly one out of every five deaths occurring among English children. That is surely a very surprising and a very grave fact. Diseases of the respiratory organs, including phthisis, appear to be the next most fatal. They cause about one out of every six deaths. Diarrhœa in all its forms did not carry off half as many children as brain disease; scarlatina was even less fatal than diarrhœa; and whooping-cough came after scarlatina. Measles ranked still lower, with an average of 300 deaths each year, or less than quarter the number referable to brain disease. And the annual proportion set down to small-pox is no more than sixty-five. For one child killed by small-pox, then, during the ten years under review, nineteen died of brain disease, and of all the deaths of children only one in a hundred was caused by small-pox. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to infer from these facts that small-pox is being eradicated. Since the period to which this return relates it will be recollected that we have been visited by a small-pox epidemic. The frightfully high mortality which we have now shown to be caused among children by brain disease is rendered still more remarkable by the fact that the phenomenon is not confined to the urban and manufacturing divisions. In the south-eastern counties, for instance, where the death-rate among children is lowest, brain disease is still the most frequent cause of death. Even there it is responsible for one out of every six deaths. And in Monmouthshire and Wales it is twice as fatal as in the south-east: 1,788 deaths of children out of a total of 5,663, that is to say, one in three, are there set down to brain disease."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

This spirit-stirring article induced the following letter, and the subjoined report of one of my Lectures:

Stamford Villa, Brook Street, Gloucester, *pro. tem.*,

October 20th, 1873.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE."

SIR,—With feelings of considerable emotion I have read the article in

your impression of Saturday last, headed "Infant Mortality;" for on Thursday last I delivered a lecture in Clifton in which I expatiated on this very question, as I have done in my addresses on the custom of smoking, for many years past.

I have a large amount of startling evidence which justifies the conclusion, that England's future is threatened by the *cause* of her infant mortality, but I am precluded when ladies are present from saying all I am acquainted with on this subject.

To you, Sir, I may say, additionally to what you will find in the paper I send herewith, that the prostrating effects of smoking tobacco is a frequent cause of domestic strife, of small families, and of the inferiority in bulk, stature and mental calibre of late-born children. You, Sir, have *virtually* summoned national consideration of a great question—a question of much greater importance than it has yet obtained.

Some years ago I lectured in the Town Hall, Durham, on the custom of smoking, under the presidency of Mr. Shaw, surgeon to the prison, and at the close of my lecture, in which infant mortality was made a special topic, the Chairman said, I can endorse all Mr. Reynolds has said on this subject. "In one street in this city half the deaths of the children was owing to smoking. They were born with feeble constitutions, and they inhaled smoke from their fathers' pipes which killed them." I spoke at some length about the effects of tobacco in lowering the standard of the population, and Mr. Shaw said, I have had 1800 militia men under my inspection in this city whose average height did not exceed five feet two inches.

In the faculty Hall, Glasgow, at the close of a discussion with the Members of the Medical Society, on the custom of smoking, I said,—No one smokes to any appreciable extent and thereby enfeebles himself without transmitting to his children, if he becomes a father, the effects of his habit. Dr. Lyon, the President of the faculty, said,—"*This is a new sentiment but I will endorse it.*"

Should any remarks of yours be elicited by my communication, in your valuable journal, I shall be obliged by your posting me a copy to the above address.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

THOMAS REYNOLDS,

*Secretary to the British Anti-Tobacco Society,*

47, Clissold Road, Stoke Newington, London, N.

MR. REYNOLDS IN CLIFTON—THE GREAT TOBACCO QUESTION.

ON Thursday night an interesting meeting was held in the Victoria-rooms on the "Great Tobacco Question." The Rev. J. F. Tinling



presided. Mr. Willis, of Stoke's Croft, commenced the proceedings with prayer, and the chairman, in an animated address, spoke strongly about the prevalent and injurious effects of tobacco. Mr. Reynolds, on rising, said he was often animated to exertion by remembering that Luther said he would rather do the least good thing than obtain all the conquests of Alexander and Cæsar, and he accounted it a great privilege to address an audience on the custom of smoking. When he commenced the anti-tobacco agitation, he called on a physician in Derby, who on reading the prospectus of the Society, said: "An Anti-Tobacco Society! What in the world shall we have next? An anti-eating Society, an anti-walking about Society, or an anti-marrying Society!" Mr. Reynolds replied, "Don't you wonder, doctor, that there was not such a Society long ago established?" "No, I do not! I regret I cannot smoke myself, especially on a cold night." He was then asked if he did not know that smokers were more susceptible to night air than if they were in a natural condition, and this he physiologically convinced him of. The exaltation of the nervous force, which is the first effect of tobacco, increases animal heat, and subsequently depresses it, thereby cold air has greater influence. A medical adviser on whom he some years ago called in Bristol, confessed to being unable to insure his life through defective action of the heart from smoking, and was told by the late Dr. Lyon that it would be robbing the office if he were to pass him, and Mr. Reynolds added: although there are ladies present, I must not withhold the remark which followed, viz.: If you, as the father of a family, have defective action of the heart, in the nature of things, can your children have healthy action of the heart? This, he added, is the worst effect of smoking. Its transmittal effects on posterity. The late Dr. Pidduck said:—In no instance is the sin of the father more strikingly visited upon his children, than the sin of tobacco smoking. The nervous tremours, the hysteria, the hypochondriasis, the suffering lives and the early deaths of the children of inveterate smokers, bear ample testimony to the unsoundness of the constitution transmitted through this pernicious custom. If, said Mr. Reynolds, colts and calves, lambs, and the offspring of other animals were to die off as children do, there would be a summons to men of science to ascertain the cause and seek its prevention. A London minister of religion, who through him was reclaimed from smoking, told him that after overcoming the inconvenience of abstaining from tobacco, he could read much more continuously, his imagination was more fertile, he could preach with much greater freedom, and as a Christian, he had far greater enjoyment. These items, the lecturer said, he would like to have pasted inside every smoking minister's pulpit in the kingdom to cure them. No justification is used by them for smoking but its soothing effect, which is really arresting the vital forces and lowering the vigour of the brain. Mr. Reynolds said he hoped there were teetotallers and Good Templars present, for he had invited them, and all smokers to come and discuss the question with him. Smoking teetotallers and Good Templars he considered only half teetotallers. Some little time ago, a body of Good Templars came all the way from America to meet the London Good Templars, which led to the appointment of a committee to consider the custom of smoking, and the decision to which they came was, that



members should not smoke while wearing regalia, nor in the ante-rooms. This he the lecturer said is comparable to a minister of religion saying at the Lord's table, "don't smoke while you are here, but do as you like elsewhere." The great need of the times he considered is the repression of the custom of smoking, for if the means in operation for diminishing the drinking habits of the people of this country were multiplied a hundred-fold, there will be no possibility of lessening the consumption of strong drinks with the increase of population. Instances of interviews with smokers in the streets, and of the beneficial effects of abstaining from tobacco, brought the lecturer's topics to a close, of which the two following were adduced—One of them he saw with a long pipe in his mouth in the town of Cheltenham, reeling about at twelve o'clock in the day. He was reclaimed from smoking, and his own account was, that he was never thirsty, and from being a sot and penniless he became sober and industrious, a member of a christian community, and a flourishing tradesman. Another instance was that of a young man who heard a lecture on smoking in the town of Reading, a few years ago, who resolved not to smoke for three months, and then finding himself better in health and pocket, resolved not to smoke again. He became a Sunday school teacher, a member of a Christian church, and has as attractive a shop as any in the town of Reading, and when he (Mr. Reynolds) saw him about a month ago, he had eleven men in his employ. The great need of the times, said the lecturer, is that bands of hope should adopt the double pledge of abstinence from tobacco and alcohol. Nothing short of this would prevent the increased consumption of strong drinks with the increase of population. This only would keep the boys of England in the Sunday schools, and keep them in attendance on places of public worship. One of the audience wished to know if smoking does any good. Mr. Reynolds said "No." The late Dr. Copland, a medical man of great eminence once said, "No medical man recommends smoking that has not his eye on his own pocket;" and Dr. Gully says, "I defy any man to cure a smoking patient unless he gives up the habit." An inquiry was made by another of the audience about lunacy in connection with smoking. To this it was replied that, in company with Sir Walter Trevelyan, he visited the asylum at Morpeth, and the surgeon there said ninety per cent. of the male patients who were admitted at Prestwich when he was there and at Morpeth were free users of tobacco—that it is proposed, on account of the great increase of lunacy within the last ten years, to erect another asylum in Kent at a cost of £190 or £200,000; that at the St. Pancras Workhouse there were 36 lunatics when he called there some time ago, 30 were smoking, the remaining would smoke if they were able to get up and the superintendent and all his helpers were smokers! The meeting was concluded by singing the Doxology. Some of the audience remained behind, wishing to leave their names as converts from the intoxicating weed.

The following document, which is copied from the Bulletin of our French co-adjutors, contains remarkable confirmatory opinions with ours, of what Tobacco does on the physical and mental constitutions of the young, and in superinducing the low condition which characterises this degenerate generation,—

WHAT IS THOUGHT IN FRANCE OF THE EFFECTS OF TOBACCO  
BY A MEDICAL INVESTIGATOR.

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"PETITION ADDRESSED TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY M. DE BEAUPRE  
GENTLEMEN AND DEPUTIES,

" Having had the honour of sending you a petition aiming at the legal suppression of drunkenness, in September, 1871, and having seen this desire realized by the law of the 23rd January, 1873, I take the liberty of shewing you—

" 1st.—That doctors and chemists agree that the use of tobacco by adults and young children occasions the most dangerous diseases. That cases of convulsions, insanity, feebleness of the functions of the brain, have been observed in the state academies, schools and colleges, and in the workshops, mills and manufactories.

" 2nd.—Moralists observe that frequent resorting to divans, public houses and other places of amusement where smoking is permitted, encourages laziness, and induces men to leave their studies, workshops, etc. Dr. Caron says: "That it is in these places where every description of bad conduct and libertinism is indulged in, that persons are almost involuntarily obliged to drink alcohol to dissipate the poisoning effects of tobacco."

" 3rd.—That the physical and moral degeneracy, now so perceptible in young persons, may almost always be attributed to the early use of tobacco, more so even than alcohol.

" 4th.—That adults influence young persons, by their example, to contract these deadly habits, which when once rooted in require nothing but time to develope.

" 5th.—That the salary of workmen and apprentices is perceptibly reduced by an expense which increases continually during the hours of rest to the damage of order and foresight.

" 6th.—That these same habits by producing such serious changes in the organization become one of the chief sources of those vices which degrade humanity.

" 7th.—For these reasons I beg you to forbid the use of tobacco in what form soever to every person under sixteen years old; and that the fourth article of the law of 1873 against drunkenness may be made applicable to tobacco.

Hoping you will take my petition into consideration,

I remain, yours most respectfully,

DE BEAUPRE."

Boulogne-lay de Paris.



An interview may not inappropriately here be introduced between the writer and Dr. Henry Brown, Physician to the Manchester Infirmary. That gentleman, after spending an evening at his own residence with other members of the faculty to discuss the custom of smoking, made an appointment with the writer to meet him with his patients at the Infirmary. Among the applicants came a youth of eighteen with his father. "Here," said Dr. Brown, "is a youth suffering from some of the effects which you attribute to smoking, but this youth has never smoked, chewed, or taken snuff. What will you say to this? His father has done this for him. His father! Yes, his father. Ask him a few questions. How long have you been a smoker? Some twenty-five years: Yes, Dr. Brown, added the writer and by his appearance I should say an ounce a day many times."

"Have you ever smoked an ounce of tobacco in a day? "Yes, very often!" On this confession Dr. Brown whispered,—"*This is the iniquity of the father visited on his son!*"

Having ascertained where the youth resided, he was called upon, and a younger brother was labouring also under a mortal disease. Their mother, as healthy a looking woman as any in Manchester, and the father, a naturally well-built man, but poisoned with tobacco, and the penalty, sick and dying children.

Dr. Richardson, to whom we are indebted for much valuable result from his investigations, makes the following formidable asseveration,—"*If both sexes of our young people were to smoke as those of our own sex do without an influx of population from other countries the race would die out!*" Let every lover of his country and his kind ponder this affirmation and deduce from it the fact which we inculcate, viz., England's future decline through smoking!

It is manifestly through the non-addiction of females, to smoking as a rule, that our species is conserved. That through smoking, as manifestly is there

"A sly, treacherous miner, working in the dark,"

and undermining that physical and reproductive energy which once impaired impairs in perpetuity and transmittally!

Finally, according to *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, the average height of Englishmen some seventy years ago was five feet ten inches, and of Englishwomen five feet six inches, but at the present time it is doubtful whether the average height of our own sex would be within five inches of the former height, of the other sex, born within the last twenty-five years, there is a much greater disproportion, which is not difficult to explain.

This exposition will doubtless cause much searching inquiry, and bitter reflection. A Minister of religion says, "When I was a young man I knew nothing about the consequences of smoking upon posterity. All my children are sufferers through my habits." Every young man should be told that smoking is incompatible with healthy progeny. That unhealthy progeny is a great cause of parental sorrow and constant anxiety.

If a young man or a young woman saw an estate, which would have been his or hers, but for a reckless parent's extravagance, that would be as nothing compared with beginning life with a feeble constitution!